



# C A L I F O R N I A

## Labor & Workforce Development Agency

### N E W S R E L E A S E

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Arnold  
Schwarzenegger

**Secretary**  
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### **\$500,000 Pilot Grant Available for Rural Public-Private Partnership under the Governor's California Nurse Education Initiative**

FRESNO – Governor Schwarzenegger's California Nurse Education Initiative continues to fund public-private partnerships to expand nursing education throughout California. A partnership between Fresno City College and seven rural hospitals in Northern California, including Mayers-Memorial Hospital in Fall River Mills has been established to provide an on-line LVN to RN program with an in-person clinical component. The program will begin this May with approximately 24 LVN students. "We appreciate the expertise that Fresno City College will bring to our hospitals and greatly appreciate the Governor's emphasis on the nursing workforce. This is a very important step for rural hospitals," said Katherine Ann Campbell, CEO of Mayers-Memorial Hospital.

"We welcome opportunities to expand the distance education component to our nursing program which will help our students advance into the RN level, said Dr. Cynthia E. Azari, President, Fresno City College. "Meeting the demands of the nursing shortage is a priority for FCC and our health care providers protecting the health of the Valley. We need to continue to provide students with marketable skills that are needed in the Central Valley," she added. "In 2008 over 300 RN students graduated from the FCC Nursing Program and currently there are close to 300 RN students in our nursing programs," said Azari.

Doug Hoffner, Acting Secretary for the Labor and Workforce Development Agency indicated "This partnership is one of the many ways the Governor's Nurse Education Initiative is working to expand capacity for nursing students in California. The Governor's Task Force continues to find innovative ways to address the ongoing nursing shortage." Stephanie Leach, Assistant Secretary for Policy and Program Development, coordinates the Task Force efforts on behalf of the Labor and Workforce Development Agency.

The Governor's initiative is anchored by a \$90 million, five-year public-private partnership that focuses on expansion of nurse education capacity, faculty development, student support services, including loan forgiveness, and additional funding for nursing schools. In just 24 months, enrollment in California nursing programs has increased by 24%, with over 22,000 students currently enrolled. In addition, the Board of Registered Nurse projections indicate that with over 10,000 RNs graduating this year, we will have reached a 68% increase in new RN graduates in the past four years. In 2007-08 alone, over \$47 million was provided to the 3 public school systems in CA for nursing education shows the Governor's ongoing commitment to nursing education.

For more information on the Governor's Nurse Education Initiative, go to [www.labor.ca.gov](http://www.labor.ca.gov).

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